



Auctioneers Board

Perimeter Center, Suite 400
9960 Mayland Drive
Richmond, VA 23233
804.367.8512 (Telephone)

In an effort to be an informed consumer, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Research, inspect, and know the value and quality of what you are buying ahead of time. Do not rely solely on the representation made by the auctioneer.
- Know the reputation of the auctioneer.
- Contact the Better Business Bureau and the Office of Consumer Affairs in the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs (<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov>) for information about an auctioneer. The Federal Trade Commission website also provides information that may be helpful to consumers (<http://www.ftc.gov/>).
- When hiring an auctioneer, READ and UNDERSTAND the contract.
- Know how to contact the auctioneer after the sale.
- Research the validity of “estate” or “government” sales – sometimes they are not what they are represented to be.
- All ads should have the auctioneer’s license number . . . so check up on that person’s license on the License Lookup (<http://www.dpor.virginia.gov>) or by contacting the Board office (804-367-8512).
- Know how to file a complaint (<http://www.dpor.virginia.gov>), click on “Compliance & Investigations.”
- Be clear on whether an auction is absolute or reserve and whether there is a “buyer’s premium.” An absolute auction generally means an auction where, at the time of the auction sale, the real or personal property to be sold will pass to the highest bidder regardless of the amount of the highest and last bid. A reserve auction generally means the auctioneer reserves the right to reject any and all bids.
- Know and listen to the terms and conditions of the auction given by the auctioneer prior to the start of the auction before bidding on an item. Realize that if you arrive late, you may miss the auctioneer’s announcement of the terms and conditions.
- If you don’t understand the terms and conditions as stated, **ask questions**.